

**Lower Mississippi River  
Sub-basin Committee on Hypoxia  
Sixth Meeting, Memphis, Tennessee  
December 2, 2005**

**Participants:**

**Keith Admire**, USDA/NRCS, Arkansas  
**Steve Ashby**, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/ERDC  
**James Baker**, Memphis Chapter, Sierra Club  
**Larry Beran**, Industry-Led Solutions/Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research  
**Ken Brazil**, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission  
**Darrell Brown**, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
**Sarah Clem**, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality  
**Glenn Constant**, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Louisiana  
**Doug Daigle**, Lower Miss. Sub-basin Committee  
**Katie Flahive**, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
**Rick Greene**, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
**Vernon Hartley**, Mississippi Farm Bureau  
**Richard Ingram**, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
**John Kessler**, Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
**Dean Lemke**, Iowa Department of Agriculture  
**John McClurkan**, Tennessee Department of Agriculture  
**Dugan Sabins**, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
**Bob Singleton**, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality  
**Earl Smith**, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission  
**Steve Spengler**, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
**Mike Sullivan**, USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service  
**Ken Teague**, U.S. EPA Region 6  
**Peter Tennant**, Ohio River Sanitation Commission  
**Larinda Tervelt**, EPA/Gulf of Mexico Program  
**Deetra Washington**, Louisiana Governor's Office of Coastal Activities

**Final Agenda:**

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Review of Action Plan and Sub-basin Committee Work Plan**

– *Doug Daigle, SBC Coordinator*

**Briefings**

Ohio River Sub-basin Committee Report

– *Peter Tennant, ORSANCO*

Corps of Engineers Workshop on Nitrogen in Large Rivers

– *Steve Ashby, COE/ERDC*

Industry-Led Solutions

– *Larry Beran, TIAER*

Updates on Lower Mississippi SBC Focus Watershed Projects

– *Earl Smith, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission; Richard Ingram, Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality*

Joint Sub-basin Committee Effort for funding  
– *Dean Lemke, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture, Upper Miss. Sub-basin Committee (UMRSHNC)*

#### **Break**

#### **Discussion of Lower River Nutrient Symposium**

Upper Mississippi River Symposium (September 05)  
– *Dean Lemke, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture*  
Gulf Science Symposium  
– *Rick Greene, US EPA*  
Focus and Scope of Lower Miss. Symposium  
– *participants*

#### **Lunch**

#### **Briefing**

Citizen Monitoring for Nutrient Levels in the Mississippi River  
– *James Baker, Memphis Chapter, Sierra Club*

#### **Symposium Discussion**

Topics, Planning, Timetables  
– *participants*

#### **Key Discussion Points**

#### **Briefing:**

### **Ohio River Sub-basin Committee**

- Committee has developed a framework for nutrient reduction
- Emphasized protection of local waters (noted that few wastewater plants in the Ohio River Sub-basin have N or P limits or guidelines)
- Decided to use the strategy suggested by the Modeling, Monitoring, and Research (MMR) report
- Incorporating nutrient reduction that's being carried out in the sub-basin for the Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes efforts
- Assess nutrient trading prospects (a trading program is being developed for the Miami Conservancy District)

### **Corps Workshop on Nitrogen in the Mississippi River (August 05)**

- Focused on nitrogen processes **in** the river, which is something that Corps river management can impact
- There are opportunities for denitrification on the upper Mississippi with the structures that the Corps manages
- Nitrogen is not uniformly distributed in the river
- ERDC (Vicksburg District) is developing a literature database
- The Corps has been doing a lot of coastal monitoring post-hurricane, which will be another source of information

### **Industry-Led Solutions**

- ILS held its fourth meeting last week in Alexandria, Va., formally organizing itself for 501©3 status
- In the Mississippi River Basin, ILS will focus on pilot watershed projects, primarily at the micro-watershed level (@4000 acres)
- These will be led by producers (such as the project in the Vermillion Watershed in Louisiana)

- Key concerns they have about current trends include absentee ownership and how this affects conservation incentives, and the development of water quality standards

### **Sub-basin Committee Funding**

- There is currently no sustained institutional framework for supporting the Sub-basin Committees
- They are appreciative for the on-going support from EPA (just received notice of being awarded grant for joint proposal to Gulf of Mexico Program)
- States have provided significant in-kind donations of staff time and expenditures over the past 5 years and should document that
- New states are coming to the table (Ohio has joined the Task Force)

### **Lower River Nutrient Symposium Discussion:**

### **Upper River Nutrient Symposium (September 05)**

- Critical decisions need to be made about management practices, target areas, and strategies
- States in the upper Miss. decided to embrace the issue and put together symposium
- Their symposium followed a plan:
  1. selection of conference chair – someone well-networked with the science – and a planning committee
  2. issued a call for papers focused on 14 key technical questions
  3. for each question, 1-3 authors reviewed the entire body of research for their papers, and a panel reviewed/critiqued their work
  4. each presentation of papers was followed by dialogue with panel, and written questions from audience
  5. authors were asked to revise papers if appropriate (draft papers are on the website, [www.umrshnc.org](http://www.umrshnc.org))
  6. utilized one large plenary session (no concurrent sessions)
  7. focused on science, not policy
  8. aimed for a particular audience (science and research) to engage presenters in dialogue)
  9. end product will be an Executive Summary/White Paper

### **Lower Mississippi River Symposium Planning**

- Important to remember that the symposium is part of the *Action Plan* reassessment process
- There are obviously overlaps with the Gulf Science Symposium for the coastal area;
- The Coordinating Committee also decided to hold a symposium on Source, Fate, and Transport of Nutrients in the river, which will focus on chemical processes, and follow the Lower River meeting
- There are significant differences between Upper and Lower River hydrology and landscapes – issues in the Lower River are more diverse, and there are major changes in the system south of the Old River control structure
- Question of whether two conferences are needed to adequately address the tributaries and the distributary zone

- The Corps will contribute support to the Lower River Symposium, and can offer its facilities in Vicksburg (depending on availability and timing)
- Other parts of the lower river are sinks besides the coastal area; wintertime flooding of fields is one of the practices to look at
- There's good data on sediment retention impacts, for projects like stream bank stabilization in the Yazoo Basin

Potential meeting sites: Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Memphis, Jackson, Vicksburg